

Abdominal exercise with Core 4

1. Tummy Tightening Breathing

When to start

This exercise can be started within days of surgery. Provided all is well, you can even start while you are still in hospital, and your recovery is progressing normally.

How to do it

Lie on your back, with your head supported by a pillow and your knees bent as far as is comfortable. Simply take a deep breath in and slowly exhale through your mouth.

As you exhale, gently tighten up the deep muscles in your lower tummy. You should feel a very gentle 'tightening'. Don't try to lift your bottom or press your back into the bed. Just hold this 'brace' feeling for a count of 3-5 seconds, and then release. Breathe and relax and then repeat 3-5 times.

As you progress, you can do the exercise on the floor without a pillow and aim for a 'stronger' tightening feeling. Hold the 'brace' for a count of 10-15 and breathe deeply in and out 2 or 3 times. Repeat up to 5 times. Place your hands on your tummy so you can check and feel the muscles tightening.

 Try to do this 2 or 3 times per day.



2. Pelvic Tilt

When to start

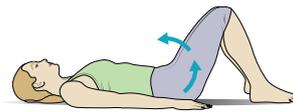
This exercise can also be done just days after surgery. Just start very gently and work within a small pain free range.

How to do it

Lie on your back, with your head supported by a pillow and your knees bent as far as is comfortable. Very gently rock your pelvis upwards and flatten your back into the bed or floor. You should feel your tummy and bottom muscles tighten a little. Rock back to your starting position and repeat. Initially just aim for a 5 repetitions, and go very gently.

As you progress, allow your back to arch up a little more, and tighten your tummy more strongly as you push your back into the floor. Build up towards 20 reps.

 Try to do this 2 or 3 times per day.



3. Hip Lift/Bridge

When to start

Introduce this exercise 7-10 days after surgery and initially make sure you do it very gently and with a small movement, only going as high as feels comfortable.

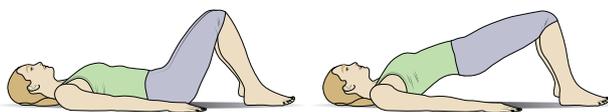
How to do it

Lie on your back, with your head supported by a pillow and your knees bent as far as is comfortable.

Very gently tilt your pelvis backwards and tighten your pelvic floor muscles. Lift your bottom off the bed/floor and slowly lift up vertebrae by vertebrae until your bottom is off the bed. Lift your bottom as high as you comfortably can. Hold this for a moment, then slowly lower your spine and pelvis back down. Imagine you're lifting a string of pearls off the floor and back down again.

Repeat 3-5 times initially building up to 10-15 repetitions in time and lifting higher as you feel more comfortable.

 Try to do this 2 or 3 times per day.



4. Knee Rolls

When to start

Introduce this exercise 7-10 days after surgery. Always work within a pain free range and keep the movement very small to begin with.

How to do it

Lie on your back, with your head supported by a pillow and your knees bent as far as is comfortable. Arms out to the sides. Keep your knees and ankles together and gently let your knees begin to drop over to one side. Only go as far as is comfortable, then carefully tighten your tummy muscles and roll your knees over to the other side. Try to keep your shoulders down and your head relaxed, looking up with your eyes. Aim for 5 rolls.

As time goes on, you can increase the range so your knees drop lower and build up to 20 repetitions.

 Do this 2-3 times per day.

Note! If you have any concerns about whether or not you should do the exercises, talk to your ostomy care nurse or surgeon before you start.

